

"As a nation they are unsocial, litigious, and vindictive. An injury received by one of them is very rarely forgotten, and, if he cannot revenge it himself, he will leave the feud to his son. Their passion for litigation is excessive: they will frequently undertake difficult and expensive journeys, in a cause where perhaps the matter in dispute is not of the value of a rouble. Their unsocial dispo-[40]sition, which leads them to prefer settling by single families at a distance from each other, is strikingly contrasted with the cheerful and ready hospitality which they show to strangers. They very seldom settle in communities, and it is only along the route from Jakuzk to the Aldan, where the country is more populous, that such settlements are now and then to be met with; but beyond the Werchojansk chain, the solitary jurti are often hundreds of wersts apart, so that the nearest neighbours may not see each other for years. Such distances are far greater than can be required on account of pasture, and are rather to be ascribed to the disposition which leads them to seek solitude, and to avoid all social intercourse."